

YOUTH SPORTS POSITION STATEMENT

Introduction

Participation in youth sports is an important part of the growth and development of children and provides both physical and mental health benefits. By their nature, youth sports bring together children and adults from different neighborhoods and communities. This can lead to increased risk of COVID-19 spread and introduction or reintroduction of the virus into new areas. While COVID-19 is circulating in the United States, measures need to be taken in order to ensure that activities are conducted in a way that minimizes risk.

The following are Central District Health's recommendations for youth sports activities based on the level of community spread and the school categories.

Until the time that gatherings of unlimited size are allowed, tournaments and other large events with more than two teams present should not be held.

During Every Category

- Encourage physical distancing.
- Adhere to local public health orders related to mask mandates where applicable, or teach and reinforce the use of face coverings whenever possible.
- Routinely clean and disinfect equipment and surfaces.
- Discourage sharing of water bottles and cups.
- Provide and encourage hand washing and use of hand sanitizer often.
- Encourage athletes to participate in individual drills and activities.
- Encourage participants to use their own equipment, when possible.
- Monitor athletes and coaches/staff for signs and symptoms of COVID, require ill persons to stay home.

Category 3 (Red) of School Operations

During Category 3, CDH recommends that youth sports be assessed based on whether the activity can be done with physical distancing and face coverings at all times.

Category 3 (Red) of School Operations (continued)

For those youth sports where physical distancing and face coverings are either not practical or cannot be enforced, the activity **should be paused until in Category 2 (Yellow)**. CDH believes this is the best way to reduce risk of transmission among kids and anyone associated with the sport.

- This is for both **school-related and non-school-related youth sports** while the school district is in Category 3 (Red).
- No inter-organization youth sports recommended while in Category 3 (Red).
- Group/team practices may occur, provided that appropriate physical distancing occurs. Plan and facilitate individual/small group drills; discourage scrimmaging.
- Youth sports can be high-risk and are leading to a number of exposures and quarantines.

Category 2 (Yellow) of School Operations

- Group/team practices, scrimmages, and games may occur but no more than two teams or groups should be present. Total number of spectators should be limited to what is allowable based on local public health orders for max capacity of gathering sizes.
- If a team is traveling from another county or state, cancel or postpone the event if the team is traveling from an area designated Category 3 (or equivalent) by their local public health department.
- Inter-state activities are not recommended when there is still community spread.

Category 1 (Green) of School Operations

- Scrimmages, games, and no more than two leagues, schools, or groups should be present at the venue or field at the same time. Total number of spectators should be limited to what is allowable based on local public health orders for max capacity of gathering sizes. If no max capacity size is indicated in a public health order, then organizations (including schools) should allow only the number of spectators where physical distancing of at least six feet can be maintained between members of different households.
- If a team is traveling from another county or state, cancel or postpone the event if the team is traveling from an area designated Category 3 (or equivalent) by their local public health department.

Table for Schools: Level of Community Spread Categories

Level of Contact	Examples from IHSAA	Category 1	Category 2	Category 3 Parameters: See below
High	Wrestling, football, performance and competitive cheer and dance/drill that involves stunting	Multi-team/group games	Two team/group games <u>within your school district</u> . No tournaments.	CDH Recommends <u>pausing high-contact activities</u> until in Category 2 (Yellow).
Medium-High	Basketball, volleyball, baseball, softball, soccer	Multi-team/group games	Two team/group games <u>within your school district</u> . No tournaments.	CDH Recommends <u>pausing medium-high contact activities</u> until in Category 2 (Yellow).
Medium	Gymnastics, tennis, swimming relays, pole vault, high jump, long jump, bowling, and 7 on 7 football	Multi-team/group games	Multi-team/group games <u>within your conference</u> . Small tournaments with extreme caution.	Two team/group games <u>within your school district</u> . No tournaments.
Low	Individual running events, throwing events (javelin, shot put, discus), individual swimming, golf, weightlifting, performance and non-competitive dance/drill with no stunting, and cross country running (with staggered starts)	Multi-team/group games. Large tournaments/events may be considered with caution and strict adherence to public health orders and safety protocols.	Multi-team/group games. Small tournaments/events may be considered with caution and strict adherence to public health orders and safety protocols.	Multi-team/group games, <u>within your conference</u> , limit number of teams or stagger activities to ensure gatherings remain small in number, but physical space can be considered.
Spectators		Where physical distancing can be maintained, follow any local public health gathering size limits		

IHSAA is the Idaho High School Activities Association